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ABSTRACT

Project CHOICE was designed to offer Chinese-speaking students of limited English proficiency (LEP) the opportunity to study business, technical, and computer subjects at Seward Park, and Washington Irving High Schools; subsequently, Norman Thomas High School was substituted for the latter school. Students received instruction in English as a Second Language (ESL) and Native Language Arts (NLA). They received bilingual instruction in the content areas of mathematics, science, and social studies and were offered services that included academic and career counseling, college advisement and placement, and job placement. The project also offered extracurricular activities to the students, staff development activities to project and school staff, and parental involvement activities. Evaluation of project CHOICE showed that it met its objectives in ESL, NLA, content area courses, career education, attendance, staff development, and curriculum development. Quantitative data were not provided for one of its two parental involvement objectives, but a subjective assessment suggested that it was met. One recommendation was made: if funds permit, the project should add a guidance counselor to its staff or explore alternate means to support the position. (GLR)

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OREA Report

EVALUATION SECTION REPORT

CHINESE OPPORTUNITIES IN CAREER EDUCATION
(PROJECT CHOICE)
Grant Number: T00A80043

1988-89

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EVALUATION SECTION
John E. Schoener, Chief Administrator
April 1990

EVALUATION SECTION REPORT

CHINESE OPPORTUNITIES IN CAREER EDUCATION
(PROJECT CHOICE)

Grant Number: T00A80043

1988-89

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CHINESE OPPORTUNITIES IN CAREER EDUCATION
(PROJECT CHOICE)
1988-89

SUMMARY

- Project CHOICE was fully implemented. During the 1988-89 school year, participating students received instruction in English as a Second Language (E.S.L.); Native Language Arts (N.L.A.); content areas; and career education subjects. The project provided support services, staff and curriculum development, and parental involvement activities.

- The project fully met all of its objectives: E.S.L., N.L.A., content area, career education, attendance, staff development, curriculum development and parental involvement.

Chinese Opportunities in Career Education (Project CHOICE) completed its first year of an Elementary and Secondary Education Act (E.S.E.A.) Title VII three-year funding cycle. Its purpose was to offer Chinese-speaking students of limited English proficiency (LEP students) the opportunity to study business, technical, and computer subjects. CHOICE operated at Seward Park and Washington Irving High Schools during the fall and at Seward Park and Norman Thomas High Schools in the spring.

Students received instruction in English as a Second Language (E.S.L.) and Native Language Arts (N.L.A.). They received bilingual instruction in the content areas of mathematics, science, and social studies. Students also enrolled in vocational courses, where they received the assistance of a bilingual paraprofessional. Project CHOICE also offered support services that included academic and career counseling, college advisement and placement, and job placement. The project offered extracurricular activities to the students, staff development activities to project and school staff, and parental involvement activities. Staff were also involved in curriculum development.

The Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment (OREA) evaluated the program's objectives by interviewing program and school staff; observing classes; examining demograhic, attendance, test, and course data; and inspecting program records.

Project CHOICE met its objectives in E.S.L., N.L.A., content area courses, career education, attendance, staff development, and curriculum development. The project did not provide quantitative data for one of its two parental involvement objectives, but a subjective assessment suggests that it was met; the project did meet the objective for which it submitted data.

A major limitation of the program was the lack of a bilingual guidance counselor.

The conclusions, based on the findings of this evaluation, lead to the following recommendation:

- If funds permit, the project should add a guidance counselor to its staff or explore alternate means to support the position.

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I. INTRODUCTION

This report documents the Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment's (OREA's) evaluation of the program, Chinese Opportunities in Career Education (Project CHOICE). Project CHOICE was in the first year of Elementary and Secondary Education Act (E.S.E.A.) Title VII funding. The program started at Seward Park and Washington Irving High Schools, but it substituted Norman Thomas High School for the latter school when enrollment there proved inadequate. The program offered 450 students of limited English proficiency (LEP students) English as a Second Language (E.S.L.); Native Language Arts (N.L.A.); the content area subjects of mathematics, science, and social studies; and career education courses in computer programming, accounting, and mechanical drawing. The project also provided counseling and career and college placement assistance, as well as extracurricular, parental involvement, and staff development activities.

HISTORY OF THE PROGRAM

Approximately 20,000 Chinese immigrants settle in the New York City area each year, which results in a permanent need for bilingual education services. Seward Park High School, on the outskirts of Chinatown, has had programs of Chinese bilingual education for more than ten years. The Chinese Achievement and Mastery Program (Project CHAMP) completed a five-year Title VII funding cycle in 1987-88.

Washington Irving High School has become a specialized school for international studies and foreign languages. Chinese enrollment, however, dropped, and by the fall of 1988 it was no longer cost-effective to house a Chinese bilingual program. The project director received permission to change the project site to Norman Thomas High School for the spring 1989 semester. This school specializes in career education, particularly in business and computer science.

SETTING

Norman Thomas High School is located in a large office building in the Murray Hill section of Manhattan. It serves students from all over the city.

Seward Park High School is on the Lower East Side. Hispanic and Chinese students each represented approximately 45 percent of the school's population of about 3,000.

PARTICIPATING STUDENTS

For fall of 1988, Project CHOICE provided data for 399 students at Seward Park High School and 20 students at Washington Irving High School. For spring of 1989, the project provided data for 418 students at Washington Irving High School and 42 at Norman Thomas High School. (See Table 1 for the distribution of project students by age and grade.) Students' countries of origin included Taiwan, Hong Kong, Vietnam, and the People's Republic of China, from which most of the students had recently emigrated.

TABLE 1

Number of Program Students by Age and Grade[a]

Age	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12	Total
14	2	0	0	0	2
15	24	15	5	0	44
16	43	25	35	0	103
17	30	26	59	10	125
18	23	14	38	7	82
19	17	11	40	8	76
20	4	2	24	8	38
21	1	1	2	9	13
TOTAL	144	94	203	42	483[b]

Over-Age Students

Number	118	54	104	25	301
Percent	81.9	57.2	51.2	59.5	62.3

Note. Shaded boxes indicate expected age range for grade.

[a] As of June 1989.

[b] Data were missing for four students.

- Forty-two percent of project students were in the eleventh grade.
- Sixty-two percent of project students were over-age for their grade.
- Eighty-two percent of ninth graders were over-age.

Seventy-four percent of the students had two years or less of education in the United States. Eighty-one percent of the program students had between five and nine years of education in their native countries.

Many project students worked after school to supplement family income.

STAFF

Title VII funded five staff members: two resource/curriculum specialists, one family worker, and two paraprofessional educational assistants. Tax-levy funds paid the project director's salary, and the Board of Education's Access to Program Training (APT) program funded two additional paraprofessionals. All staff were bilingual in Chinese and English. Except for the family worker, all staff worked full-time. All staff but one paraprofessional were based at Seward Park High School.

The director supervised project staff at Seward Park High School. An assistant principal at Norman Thomas High School supervised the paraprofessional there. Assistant principals at both sites supervised the teachers of participating students.

DELIVERY OF SERVICES

The program provided instruction in E.S.L., N.L.A., and the bilingual content area subjects of mathematics, science, and social studies. Vocational courses, taught in English, included computer mathematics, accounting, technical drawing, occupational

education, keyboarding, and technology. Project CHOICE offered academic and career counseling, college advisement and placement, and job placement. The project stressed extracurricular cultural and community activities, and encouraged parental involvement.

REPORT FORMAT

This report is organized as follows: Chapter II describes the evaluation methodology; Chapter III presents an analysis of the qualitative findings of the evaluation; Chapter IV gives an analysis of the quantitative findings; and Chapter V offers conclusions and recommendations based upon the results of the evaluation.

II. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The evaluation assessed two major areas: program implementation and outcome. Evaluation questions included the following:

Process/Implementation

- Did the program select students for participation according to specific criteria?
- Did the project implement the instructional activities for developing English language proficiency as proposed?
- Did the project implement the instructional activities for developing native language skills as proposed?
- Did Project CHOICE provide in-service training for staff members?
- What curricula did project staff develop?
- How many parents attended parent-teacher meetings?
- What percentage of parents participating in the E.S.L. workshops demonstrated improvement in English?

Outcome

- What was the average Normal Curve Equivalent (N.C.E.) gain on the Language Assessment Battery (LAB)?
- What percentage of program students passed their N.L.A. courses?
- What percentage of program students passed their courses in mathematics, science, and social studies?
- What percentage of program students passed their career education courses?
- What percentage of students maintained an attendance rate above 90 percent?

EVALUATION PROCEDURES

Sample

An OREA field consultant visited both sites in the spring. He interviewed school administrators and the project director and observed six classes in E.S.L., the content areas, and career education. OREA supplied the project with a student data form for each participant; Project CHOICE returned 483 completed forms.

Instruments

OREA developed interview and observation schedules. The project director completed an OREA-developed questionnaire. Project personnel used OREA-developed data retrieval forms to report student demographic, attendance, and achievement data.

Data Collection

A field consultant interviewed project and school staff members and observed classes during the spring semester. OREA supplied the project director with a questionnaire and student data forms in both fall and spring. The project returned the completed forms at the end of each semester.

Data Analysis

OREA used the Language Assessment Battery to assess improvement in English proficiency. Project CHOICE students were tested at grade level each spring. Students' raw scores were converted to Normal Curve Equivalent (N.C.E.) scores, which have multiple advantages over other scoring methods. They are

standard, normalized, and form an equal interval scale. ("Standard" indicates that the unit of measurement is a fraction of the standard deviation of the original distribution of raw scores; "normalized" refers to the fact that the scale is adjusted for the norm group so that its distribution has the shape of a normal distribution; and "equal interval scales" allow for legitimate aggregation or averaging of scores.) Project students' N.C.E.s indicated their standing in relation to the national average of 50.

To assess the significance of students' achievement in English, OREA computed a correlated *t*-test on LAB N.C.E. scores. The *t*-test determined whether the difference between the pre- and posttest scores was significantly greater than would be expected by chance variation alone.

To insure representative achievement data, OREA included only those students who had been in the program for at least five months and had attended classes for at least 100 school days. OREA extrapolated to estimate full-year scores of late-arriving and early-exiting students.

Limitations

Since all LEP students are entitled to receive bilingual and E.S.L. services, OREA was unable to select an equivalent control group. However, the use of two sets of data, as outlined above, served in lieu of a control group.

III. EVALUATION FINDINGS: IMPLEMENTATION

Project CHOICE provided LEP students with E.S.L.; N.L.A.; bilingual instruction in mathematics, science, social studies; and business and vocational courses.

STUDENT PLACEMENT AND PROGRAMMING

The program admitted students with scores below the twenty-first percentile on the English version of the Language Assessment Battery (LAB).* Students were placed in content area courses on the basis of test scores, interviews, and grades. Students took mainstream physical education, art, and music.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

The project offered courses in E.S.L., N.L.A., content area subjects, and career education courses.

English as a Second Language

The project offered courses in E.S.L. on two levels, elementary and advanced. Students taking elementary E.S.L. had three periods of instruction daily; students in advanced E.S.L. had one.

The OREA consultant observed an E.S.L. class of 12 students at Norman Thomas High School. The class, conducted entirely in

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*The Language Assessment Battery (LAB) was developed by the Board of Education of the City of New York to measure the English-language proficiency of non-native speakers of English in order to determine whether they can participate effectively in classes taught in English. Students scoring below the twenty-first percentile on the LAB are entitled to bilingual and E.S.L. services.

English, concerned the uses of "if," "can," and "could." A bilingual paraprofessional translated some difficult passages and moved among the students, assisting them with the questions and responses they were writing.

Native Language Arts

The project offered a total of eight N.L.A. classes at beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels.

Content Area Subjects

Content area subjects included mathematics, science, and social studies. The mathematics curriculum consisted of a sequence of six courses. Science courses included general science and a sequence of three biology courses. Social studies courses included sequences in global history, American history, American government, and economics.

An OREA consultant observed three content area courses at Seward Park High School. The mathematics class of 28 students was studying triangles. Students wrote their answers to problems on the chalkboard. In biology, 22 students were using microscopes to inspect molds. The teacher also lectured on the function and structure of leaves, using English punctuated with Mandarin Chinese. A paraprofessional helped with verbal and written translations. In an American history class of 22 students, the topic was slavery. The teacher lectured mainly in English and elaborated in Chinese.

Career Education Courses

The program offered bilingual courses in computer mathematics, accounting, occupational education, keyboarding, introduction to technology, and technical drawing.

An OREA consultant observed both an accounting and a computer programming class at Norman Thomas High School. A paraprofessional was present in both classes, moving from student to student, observing and commenting. Students worked in groups of four or five. The 13 students in the accounting class were using ledger sheets to work out problems from a textbook. The 18 students in the computer mathematics course did not use a textbook but worked from computer printouts to refine their COBOL programs.

Due to vandalism, only one computer terminal was available.

The teacher mentioned the exceptional work of her students, several of whom had won awards in programming.

NON-INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Project CHOICE's non-instructional component included objectives for staff and curriculum development and parental involvement. The project also provided students with support services and extracurricular activities.

Support Services

The project provided academic and personal counseling, college advisement, placement in training programs, and career orientation. The project director reported that there was a need for a bilingual guidance counselor to serve project students.

Support services also included contacting families by telephone and mail. Staff members providing such services generally received funds from sources other than Title VII.

Extracurricular Activities

The project provided field trips to museums and to the aquarium, a walking tour of Chinatown given by the Chinatown History Project, and a trip to Albany for students in a history class to familiarize themselves with the workings of state government. Many project students attended career conferences. Students displayed their music, dance, and design talents at a "China Night," held in the Seward Park High School auditorium.

Extracurricular activities extended beyond field trips and cultural events. Project CHOICE encouraged students to involve themselves as volunteer or part-time employees of Community Based Organizations (C.B.O.s) such as Asian Americans for Equality or Immigrant Social Services, Inc. Students participated as volunteers in charitable events such as Walk America. In a letter to the Seward Park High School college office, one graduating student reported that these activities had helped "to develop my leadership and build up my self-confidence."

Staff Development

The program objectives for staff development were:

- Project staff members will attend ten workshops and in-service training sessions related to the goals of the project.
- Project staff will conduct four in-service training workshops related to project goals.
- Five Project CHOICE or affiliated Seward Park High School staff will take college courses in bilingual education, career education, computer education, or other subject areas related to project goals.

Staff members attended monthly departmental meetings, staff development conferences, and orientation meetings held to discuss ways of incorporating new students into the program. Project staff attended about 35 out-of-school workshops and conferences. Among these was an Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Language Affairs (OBEMLA) Management Institute workshop in Washington, D.C., the national conference of the Association for Asian American Studies, and the conference of the New York State Association for Bilingual Education (SABE) in Buffalo. The resource specialist attended a United Nations Cultural Diversity Conference. Project CHOICE met its first staff development objective.

There were four in-service staff development workshops during the project year. At least 30 staff members attended each event. Workshops titles included: "Teaching Chinese Students in the Content Areas," "Teaching and Learning in Two Languages: A Workshop for Chinese Bilingual Teachers," "The Chinatown Garment Industry," and "Informal Comments on Chinese Literature and

Chinese Language." Project CHOICE met its second staff development objective.

Four teachers and five paraprofessionals took college or university courses related to project goals. Thus Project CHOICE met its third staff development objective.

Curriculum Development

The program objectives for curriculum development were:

- Staff members will have produced Chinese-English bilingual tape/booklet glossaries in career/technical subjects such as keyboarding, word processing, and drafting, as well as in the content areas of mathematics and social studies.
- Staff members will have produced a set of Chinese language curriculum materials for the Introduction to Occupations course.

Project CHOICE staff developed three glossaries during 1988-89. One was a vocabulary list to accompany the Regents review text, the second was an extensive American history glossary, and the third was an occupational education glossary. Project CHOICE met its first objective in curriculum development.

Since staff members also compiled a glossary for the introduction to occupations course, the project achieved its second curriculum development objective.

Parental Involvement

The project objectives for parental involvement were:

- A total of approximately 150 parents will attend parent-teacher meetings during the project year.
- Ninety percent of the parents participating in the parents' E.S.L. workshops will indicate improvement in English by the end of the project year.

Nearly 250 parents attended at least one of nine parent-teacher meetings. The highest attendance (150) was at the project's annual parents' meeting. Two parents attended sessions of the Parents' Leadership Institute. The eleventh Citywide Chinese Parents' Meeting drew 950 parents from Seward Park High School, many of whom were parents of project students. Project CHOICE met the first of its parental involvement objectives.

E.S.L. workshops for parents were held once a week, and project staff attempted to expand this number. Parents participated actively and asked the instructor to continue providing the workshops the next year. Their improvement in the use of English was evident: from being completely illiterate in English they became capable of writing their names, addresses, and simple sentences. Therefore, although the project did not provide quantitative data for the assessment of this objective, it can be said that it was achieved.

IV. EVALUATION FINDINGS: OUTCOME

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Project CHOICE posed instructional outcome objectives in the areas of E.S.L., N.L.A., content area subjects, and career education.

English as a Second Language

The evaluation objective for English language development was:

- As a result of participating in the project, E.S.L. students will make statistically significant gains in English language proficiency.

Project CHOICE provided complete LAB pretest/posttest scores for 333 students. All grades except twelfth improved their performance on the posttest. Gains ranged from .4 N.C.E.s for ninth graders to 2.1 N.C.E.s for eleventh graders. The mean gain of 1.1 N.C.E.s was significant at $p < .05$. (See Table 2.) The project, therefore, achieved its E.S.L. objective.

Native Language Arts

- By the end of project period 1988-89, 70 percent of the students participating in Project CHOICE will demonstrate growth in native language proficiency as measured by achieving a final grade of 65 or higher, based on administration of teacher-made examinations.

The project submitted data on 294 students in the fall and 278 in the spring. Of these, 91 percent (267 students) in the fall and 89 percent (246 students) in the spring achieved a final passing grade of at least 65. Thus, the project met its N.L.A. objective.

TABLE 2

Pretest/Posttest N.C.E. Differences in
the Language Assessment Battery, by Grade

Grade	Number of Students	Pretest		Posttest		Difference		t
		Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Value
9	97	5.9	5.7	6.3	6.4	.4	8.1	.51
10	64	12.0	9.3	13.1	8.3	1.1	8.3	1.08
11	155	13.9	9.0	16.1	8.6	2.1	6.6	4.11*
12	17	15.7	8.6	10.2	6.8	-5.5	8.3	-2.75
TOTAL	333	11.2	8.9	12.3	8.9	1.1	7.6	2.55*

*$p < .05$.

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- Overall, project students made statistically significant gains on the LAB.

Content Area Subjects

The evaluation objective for content area subjects was:

- By the end of project period 1988-89, 70 percent of the students participating in Project CHOICE will demonstrate mastery of the content area courses by achieving a final grade of 65 percent or higher, based on administration of teacher-made tests.

Ninety-three percent of the students in science and almost 87 percent in mathematics and social studies classes achieved a final grade of 65 percent or higher. (See Table 3.) Project CHOICE met its objective for content area subjects.

Career Education

The evaluation objective for career education was:

- By the end of project period 1988-89, 70 percent of the students participating in Project CHOICE will demonstrate mastery of career education courses by achieving a final grade of 65 percent or higher, based on administration of teacher-made tests.

Project CHOICE provided data for 250 students in the fall and 309 students in the spring. Ninety-eight percent (245) of the former and 80 percent (247) of the latter achieved a final grade of at least 65 percent. Project CHOICE met its career education objective.

NON-INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Project CHOICE posed only one non-instructional outcome objective, for attendance.

Attendance

- By the end of the project period 1988-89, 75 percent of students participating in Project CHOICE will maintain an attendance rate of above 90 percent.

TABLE 3

Student Achievement in Content Area Courses

SUBJECT	Fall		Spring		Overall	
	Number of Students	Percent Passing	Number of Students	Percent Passing	Number of Students	Percent Passing
Mathematics	425	90.6	475	82.9	900	86.6
Science	296	93.6	412	93.6	708	93.4
Social Studies	391	85.7	334	88.3	725	86.9

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- More than 85 percent of students passed all content area subjects.

Project CHOICE provided data on attendance for 416 students in the fall and 414 in the spring. Ninety-nine percent in the fall and 98 percent in the spring maintained an attendance rate of above 90 percent. The project met its attendance objective.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

In its first year of Title VII funding, Project CHOICE served Chinese-speaking students of limited English proficiency at Seward Park and Washington Irving High Schools during the fall, and at Seward Park and Norman Thomas High Schools in the spring. Students received instruction in E.S.L.; N.L.A.; the content areas of mathematics, science, and social studies; and career education courses in business, technology, and computers. The project also offered staff and curriculum development activities and activities for parental involvement.

Project CHOICE met its objectives in E.S.L., N.L.A., content area courses, and career education courses. The project met all three of its objectives in staff development. It developed all curricula as planned, meeting the curriculum development objective. Project CHOICE met the parental involvement objective for which there were data, and it can be assumed that it also met the other.

A limitation of the program was its lack of a bilingual guidance counselor.

The conclusions, based on the findings of this evaluation, lead to the following recommendation:

- If funds permit, the project should add a guidance counselor to its staff or explore alternate means to support the position.